families. The poor families will have to purchase rest of their foodgrains requirements at higher market rates than the control price in which it will have to spend a higher amount as compared to the position earlier. In this way, this scheme is likely to prove to be a total failure. Due to this, foodgrains quota being made available to the States earlier would also be reduced to half thereby causing shortage foodgrains and as a result, middlemen would be benefited.

Through you, I urge the Hon'ble Minister either to provide the remaining requirements of the foodgrains of the poor family at control rates or to increase the present 10 kg. quantity of foodgrains being provided to 40 kgs. at half the price.

(iv) Need to supply adequate liquid natural gas to Kayamkulam Thermal Power Project, Kerala to meet the power crisis in the State

[English]

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I invite the attention of the Government to the severe power crisis prevailing in Kerala.

Though the present season is monsoon season, the power situation in the State in extremely grave. To meet the ever increasing demand and the wide gap between the demand and the supply, Kerala needs new projects and an increase in the capacity of the on-going Kayamkulam thermal power station project. it was originally planned to have an installed capacity of 2000 MW. but it has been reduced to 350 MW.

Now, I understand that the NTPC is prepared to increase the capacity of the project if liquid natural gas is made available. The Government of Kerala has already taken a decision to start a liquid natural gas terminal at Cochin.

A few of the Government of India companies, including Gas Authority of India Limited and Indian Oil Corporation, are forming a joint venture to start few liquid natural gas terminals in India. Cochin has been short-listed as one of them, but no final decision has been taken.

I request the Government of India to make available the liquid natural gas for increasing the capacity of the Kayamkulam project to have its original installed capacity of 2000 MW.

(v) Need to provide more telecommunication facilities in Erode, Tamil Nadu

SHRI V.P. SHANMUGA SUNDARAM (Gobichettipalayam) : I would like to bring to your notice the deplorable state of affairs of Erode Telecom District under which my parliamentary constituency falls. There are no developmental activities taking place in Erode for the last few years. There are several villages without even a Public Telephone. In several villages where a telephone exchange is available, the wait list is so long that it is likely to be covered up only after a few years, for instance, Kolappalur and Siruvalur villages have a waiting list dating back to 1991-92. No action has been taken to increase the exchange capacity though the commercial demand is adequate enough to justify an expansion in almost all the areas of Erode Telecom District.

Sir, in Kadambur village of Satyamangalam Taluk there are more than 200 applications for telephone connections but unfortunately, there is not even a Public Telephone, Despite repeated reminders to the Telecom authorities of Erode Telecom District, no action has been taken so far. Today, in an area where telecom facilities are at back and call, non-existence of even a village public telephone, leave alone a telephone exchange at Kadambur village is not justified.

There are several areas where telephone faults are not attended to even for weeks together. But the authorities are more concerned about release of STD, PCO leaving the basic requirements unfulfilled.

I request the hon. Minister for Communications to look into these problems of Erode Telecom District and get them resolved.

(vi) Need to look into the implementation of Centrally sponsored schemes in Balia District, U.P.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIVANSH SAHAI (Salempur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, fund allocated for the works on Centrally sponsored schemes namely, a Million Wells Scheme, Jawahar Rojgar Yojana and employment Guarantee Scheme in Balia District for the year 1996-97 and prior to that have not been properly utilised. All the construction works were carried out through private contractors. But in the blocks, construction work was not got. done through the registered labourers apart from this, the allocated funds were mis-spent by showing single item, of work on the drainage and roads as having been performed several times over.

I would therefore urge the Central Government to conduct a free and fair enquiry in this regard in order to ensure proper implementation of the Central Schemes in that district.

(vii) Need to ensure payment of statutory price to sugarcane growers in Maharashtra

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : In the State of Maharashtra the factories operating in sugar cooperative sector have been consistently paying sugarcane price for gate delivery below the statutory minimum cane price fixed by the Government of India for the past two years, i.e. 1995-96 and 1996-97, as reported in the Economic Times (Mumbai Edition) 30th July, 1997. This is a very serious matter directly affecting the interests of the farmers. It is not known whether the Central Government has taken note of the violation of its sugarcane price Notification issued under the Essential Commodities Act and also whether any action has been initiated to prosecute the defaulting factories.

I further request the Central Government to indicate the statutory cane price for various regions fixed for sugar mills in Maharashtra State and actually paid by them so far during the crushing seasons of 1995-96, 1996-97, Also whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure the full payment of statutory price to the farmers for the sugarcane already delivered to factories.